

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1.(Currently Amended) Apparatus for the automated processing of meat, comprising a transport element (11)-for transporting the meat, a cutting element (12) for cutting and/or trimming the meat, a counter-surface (13)-for the cutting element (12)-and at least one control and/or regulating apparatus, which is in functional connection with the cutting element (12), ~~characterised~~ characterized in that arranged in the area of the cutting element (12)-is a threading element-(14)-, which is bent in respect of the counter-surface in the transport plane E₁ of the meat.

2.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1, characterised in that the threading element (14)-is an integral component of the counter-surface-(13).

3.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1-~~or 2~~, ~~characterised~~ characterized in that the threading element (14)-is constructed as an extension of the counter-surface-(13).

4.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 31, ~~characterised~~ characterized in that the threading element (14)-is a spatula-like plate element and

has an elongated shape, rounded at the free end, is bent in respect of the counter-surface (13) in the transport plane E₁ of the meat.

5.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to one of the claims 1 to 4, characterised in that the plate element is chamfered at least on the side of facing the meat. ~~threading element (14) is a spatula-like plate element and has an elongated shape, rounded at the free end (27).~~

6.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 5~~1~~, characterised characterized in that a unit consisting of counter-surface and the threading element is constructed as swivellable. ~~the plate element is chamfered at least on the side facing the meat.~~

7.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to one of claims 1 to 6, characterised in that a unit consisting of counter-surface (13) and threading element (14) is swivellable about at least one rotational axis. ~~constructed as swivellable.~~

8.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 7~~6~~, characterised in that the unit consisting of counter-surface (13) and threading element (14) is swivellable movable in a linear direction. ~~about at least one rotational axis (20, 25).~~

9.(Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 7 ~~or~~ 8, characterised in that a deflector element (30) is arranged on the side of the counter-surface opposite the

threading element, the unit consisting of counter-surface (13) and threading element (14) is movable in a linear direction.

10.(Currently Amended) ~~Apparatus according to one of claims 1 to 9,~~
~~characterised in that a deflector element (30) is arranged on the side of the counter-~~
~~surface (13) opposite the threading element (14).~~Method for the automated
processing of meat, comprising the steps:

- transporting the meat into the area of a cutting element,
- running the meat up against a counter-surface before the meat reaches
the cutting element,
- cutting and/or trimming the meat by means of the cutting element and
- removing the meat,

characterized in that the meat is threaded by a threading element before running up
against the counter-surface, wherein the meat is at least partially lifted from the side
and then guided on to the counter-surface.

11. – 12. (Cancelled)